(c) There is no proposal to entrust the development of these tourist circuits to foreign agencies.

Geetha Krishnan Committee Report on expenditure reforms

*589. SHRI K.RAHMAN KHAN:
SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMED KHAN (DURRU):

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the broad features of the Geetha Krishnan Committee Report on expenditure reforms;

(b) whether it has *inter-alia* recommended reduction of staff in C and D categories while it has been liberal in having more official orientation in various Ministries/Departments; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) The Expenditure Reforms Commission has submitted in all 10 reports covering 36 Ministries/Departments. The main features of the recommendations are rationalisation and optimization of Government staff strength, review of food and fertilizers subsidies and review of autonomous institutions.

(b) and (c) The Commission has gone into the question of restructuring of the Ministries/Departments specifically reviewed by it, keeping in view the changing and emerging role of Government and other relevant factors and has made suggestions for right sizing at all levels of Groups "A", "B", "C" and "D". The ERC has further observed in their Concluding Paper titled "Task Ahead" that the share of the Groups "C" and "D", especially at the support level, is as disproportionately high at 92% of the total strength. The Commission has suggested that there is need as well as feasibility for reduction in the number of such support staff, in view of vast advances in communication facilities and induction of IT facilities in Government officers. The Commission has, however, recognised that in the field formations and operational units, the proportion of employees in Groups 'C & 'D' staff could be somewhat higher than in other organisations. The Commission has, therefore, recommended that the requirement of support staff at different levels in such operational units would need to be re-determined with reference to the changes in activity requirement and work procedures, increasing use of IT facilities, etc. The thrust of the

recommendation of the Commission is to arrive at an optimal level of ratio between officers and staff with a view to rightsizing the Government.

Water Asia International Conference

*590. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Fourth Water Asia International Conference and Exhibition on Asian Water Industry was held on January 30,2002;

(b) if so, whether Government have cautioned that unless the Governments, the Industry and the people at large worked together, India could be facing a severe water scarcity in the near future;

(c) if so, the main subjects discussed in the Conference; and

(d) the steps Government propose to take to implement the decisions taken in the Conference?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI ARJUN CHARAN SETHI): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The Fourth Water Asia International Conference and Exhibition on Asian Water Industry was held from 30th January to 1st February, 2002 at Pragati Maidan, New Delhi. The Conference and Exhibition was organized by Interads Ltd. Conference & Exhibitions, New Delhi (a private sector agency). The conference *inter-alia* covered the themes on water resources management, industrial water, waste water treatment and regulatory aspects. The organizers of the conference have not come up with any recommendations.

Due to the spatial variability of rain in the country and also because of variation in population density, per capita average annual availability of water in different basins presently varies from 16,990 cubic metre in Minor River Basins Draining into Bangladesh & Myanmar and 13,636 cubic metre in Brahmaputra-Barak basin to 298 cubic metre in Sabarmati basin. Further, the temporal variability in the rainfall also creates temporary scarcity condition. With increase in population, the situation is likely to accentuate and to prevent any adverse impact, active involvement of all the sections of the society including the industry is called for. These facts, among others, were brought out in the Conference.